



**Ministry of Employment
and Investment**

1998/1999 Annual Report

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Ministry of Employment and Investment

1998/99
Annual Report



Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

British Columbia. Ministry of Employment and Investment
Annual report. -- 1993/94 -

Annual.

Continues: British Columbia. Ministry of Economic
Development, Small Business and Trade. Annual report.
ISSN 1192-7232.

ISSN 1203-9195 = Annual report - British Columbia.
Ministry of Employment and Investment

1. British Columbia. Ministry of Employment and
Investment - Periodicals. 2. Manpower policy -
British Columbia - Periodicals. 3. British Columbia -
Economic policy - Periodicals. 4. British Columbia -
Commercial policy - Periodicals. I. Title.

HC117.B7B74

354.7110682'05

C96-960060-7

Honourable Garde Gardom
Lieutenant-Governor
Province of British Columbia



May It Please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the annual report of the Ministry of Employment and Investment for the period of April 1, 1998, to March 31, 1999.

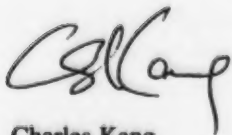
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gordon F.D. Wilson', located above the printed name.

Gordon F.D. Wilson
Minister of Employment and Investment

Honourable Gordon F.D. Wilson
Minister of Employment and Investment
Province of British Columbia

Dear Minister:

I respectfully submit the annual report of the Ministry of Employment and Investment for the period of April 1, 1998, to March 31, 1999.



Charles Kang
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Employment and Investment



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Ministry at a glance

The Ministry of Employment and Investment is the lead provincial agency for creating and protecting jobs and stimulating investment across B.C.

The ministry:

- develops trade opportunities
- fosters international and domestic private-sector investment
- facilitates and co-ordinates strategic public-sector capital investments
- works with the public sector in its economic development responsibilities, and,
- encourages the revitalization of traditional industries.

Highlights and accomplishments

The ministry was involved in numerous initiatives during the 1998/99 fiscal year. Here are the highlights and major accomplishments:

B.C. Trade and Investment Office:

- Co-ordinated outgoing and incoming international missions, including: the Premier's Business Mission to South China and Ministers' Missions to Europe, Asia and Latin America.
- Managed international offices in London and Tokyo and agents in Taipei and Hong Kong.
- Developed export strategies for targeted products, sectors and international markets.
- Advanced fuel cell commercialization by developing a fuel cell commercialization strategy.
- Undertook a number of initiatives to promote investment.
- Managed the business immigration program, which included delivering seminars, which attracted approximately 1,000 attendees.
- Managed more than \$20 million in investments in the BC Investment Fund.
- Provided business analysis and financial assistance for a number of economic initiatives.
- Supported the activities of the Job Protection Commission.
- Negotiated loans on a commercial basis to companies including Avcorp Industries, MTU Maintenance Canada, J.S. McMillan Fisheries and CGED Forest Products.
- Co-ordinated the B.C. Export Award program, providing a significant marketing boost to five award-winning companies.

Economic Development Division:

- Co-ordinated the ministry's input into on-going development of B.C.'s greenhouse gas strategy including a lead role in electricity issues.
- Completed a request for proposal under the Power for Jobs Development Rate Act and continued to negotiate several other applications.

- Worked with the Business Task Force on streamlining regulations pertaining to the Builders Lien Act.
- Developed a statistical profile of B.C.'s construction industry, updated regularly and available on the Ministry's Web site.
- Co-ordinated the delivery of \$160 million of Canada-B.C. Infrastructure Works (Phase 2) projects, creating more than 2,600 jobs on more than 200 projects.
- Played a key role in delineating the province's concerns regarding the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and was instrumental in helping focus B.C.'s concerns opposing the MAI.
- Organized Premier's Summits on Economic Opportunity in the Southern Interior (Kamloops, May 27-29, 1998) and in the Kootenays (Castlegar, Nov. 4-6, 1998). Initiated work on the Premier's Summits for the Cariboo-Chilcotin (108 Mile Ranch, May 12-14, 1999) and for Vancouver Island-Coast (Oct. 20-22, 1999).
- With the assistance of the B.C. forestry industry secured a commitment from the federal government to initiate consultations in the World Trade Organization challenging the European Union's ban on green lumber imports from Canada. Played a key supporting role, along with industry, in the 1998 WTO consultations on this issue.
- Initiated a public consultation process to determine B.C.'s interests and position in the ongoing Free Trade Area of the Americas and the proposed World Trade Organization millennium round and encouraged the federal government to take steps to ensure Canada's water resource is beyond the reach of Canada's international trade obligations.

Ministry overview and structure

Mandate

To assist in creating jobs and protecting existing ones throughout B.C. through leadership in trade, investment and capital development.

General responsibilities

■ Develops trade opportunities by:

- co-ordinating and establishing provincial government policies, positions, options and strategies for international trade negotiations thereby securing maximum market access for B.C. exporters while protecting critical domestic sectors
- representing and advancing B.C.'s interests in international trade disputes
- providing advice on application of trade agreements vis-à-vis provincial policies
- co-ordinating B.C.'s participation in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)
- ensuring B.C. has a strong presence in international markets through its foreign offices, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region
- encouraging the export of B.C. goods and services, and,
- hosting and co-ordinating outgoing and incoming trade missions.

■ Fosters international and domestic private-sector investment by:

- promoting investment opportunities
- working with the private sector to promote investment
- providing assistance on projects and investments that require financial participation and/or partnership with the provincial government
- participating in financial assistance negotiations and completing due diligence analysis for the ministry, the Job Protection Commission, Forest Renewal BC, the BC Transportation Financing Authority, and other ministries and agencies
- providing technical services and expertise to the domestic business community and being the principal source of information for them
- working to develop, maintain and pursue opportunities in knowledge-based, resource-based and value-added industries
- drawing on other instruments throughout government and the private sector, including the BC Investment Fund, Forest Renewal BC, Fisheries Renewal BC, BC Transportation Financing Authority, Duke Point Developments Ltd.,

Equity Funds, Financial Administration Act, International Financial (Tax Refund) Act, Working Opportunity Fund, etc., to promote and lever additional private-sector investment activity, and

- leveraging trade and investment through responsibility, and/or collaboration with the following legislation/agencies:
 - Job Protection Act/Commission;
 - Industrial Development Incentive Act/Industrial Incentive Fund;
 - Natural Resource Community Fund Act;
 - International Maritime Centre;
 - International Financial Centre;
 - Enterprise Corporation Act/Agency;
 - Special Enterprise Zones and Tax Relief Act;
 - Trade Development Corporation Act;
 - Victoria Line Ltd.; and,
 - Vancouver Trade and Convention Authority.

- Facilitates and co-ordinates strategic public-sector capital investments by:
 - promoting public-private partnerships for capital infrastructure projects, and,
 - co-chairing the Canada-B.C. Infrastructure Works program and agreement for the provincial government, co-ordinating the

activities of various partner agencies, reviewing program applications and directly administering projects approved under the program's enhanced public-service component.

- Works with the public sector in its economic development responsibilities by:
 - providing an economic policy and planning function for the public sector
 - leading the public sector in developing an economic framework for strategies for creating jobs and enhancing economic growth, including the development of regional job strategies
 - managing the Build BC Special Account under the Build BC Act and leading and guiding government agencies in developing specific program initiatives and proposals under the Act
 - developing and implementing electricity policy and providing timely and integrated assessment of applications for energy projects and exports
 - representing provincial interests in discussions and the development of arrangements regarding the management of downstream power benefits under the Columbia River Treaty, and,

- working with other ministries and agencies to support private-sector economic development opportunities.

- Encourages the revitalization of traditional industries by:
 - providing counseling and mediation services and developing economic plans to maintain jobs in strategic industries affected by restructuring, and,
 - undertaking special projects and recommending government financial participation with qualifying businesses.

Organizational structure

The ministry's structure includes one office, three divisions, one branch and a secretariat reporting to the deputy minister:

- BC Trade and Investment Office (BCTIO)
- Economic Development division
- Management Services division
- Communications division
- Corporate Relations branch, and,
- Gaming Policy Secretariat.

The ministry is also responsible for housing programs.

There are also two commissions, the B.C. Racing Commission and the B.C. Gaming Commission, which report to the minister.

■ BCTIO:

- facilitates and promotes international and domestic private-sector investment
- enhances and expands B.C. export opportunities
- maintains knowledge and awareness of the B.C. economy, the resource base and the industrial and business sectors
- pursues projects and programs that strengthen and diversify the economic base of the province, with emphasis on sectors that offer significant potential within the international marketplace in the 21st century, and,
- supports the creation of long-term jobs and development of the economy in all regions of B.C.

BCTIO has six branches:

- Finance and Project Evaluation
- Investment Facilitation
- Strategic Industries
- International Services
- Japan Trade, and,
- Strategic Business Unit — Asia/Pacific.

BCTIO has trade and investment representatives in the following locations around the world:

- Hong Kong
- Tokyo, Japan
- Taipei, Taiwan, and,
- London, United Kingdom.

■ **Economic Development division:**

- provides — to the other divisions, ministries, Crown corporations and Cabinet — policy development, analysis, advice, co-ordination, research, impact assessment and information in support of:
 - economic development
 - employment
 - electricity development, and,
 - international and domestic trade agreements.
- is the lead provincial agency and co-ordinating body for joint federal/provincial programs (e.g., Infrastructure Works, Western Economic Partnership Agreement)
- monitors progress on major projects for the provincial jobs strategy
- co-ordinates provincial involvement in transportation and trade corridor initiatives
- provides support and advice to the private sector concerning international and domestic trade agreements and issues
- conducts intergovernmental relations with respect to economic development, and,
- assists the public sector in its economic development responsibilities.

The division has four branches:

- International
- Economics
- Economic Partnerships, and,
- Electricity Development.

The division also includes the Summit Office, which provides support and co-ordination for Premier's Economic Summits.

The Construction Secretariat reports to the assistant deputy minister of the Economic Development division.

The secretariat:

- provides a central point of access for addressing policy and regulatory issues affecting the construction industry
- is responsible for administering the Builders Lien Act and provides support to both industry and the public, and,
- co-ordinates stakeholder agencies in an effort to strengthen linkages between government and industry.

■ **Management Services division:**

- services the needs of the ministry's management and staff in the areas of:
 - finance
 - administration
 - personnel
 - information systems
 - library
 - information and privacy, and,
 - employment equity.

The division has four components:

- Community Development Unit
- Finance and Administration branch
- Human Resources branch, and,
- Information Management branch.

This division also provides these services to the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Oil and Gas Commission.

■ Communications division:

- provides all communications, media and public relations, and issues management for the ministry
- serves as the central communications agency for the government's jobs strategy
- executes a lead role with other ministries, agencies and Crown corporations in co-ordinating and facilitating all communications activities through strategic communications planning and proactive implementation of:
 - media relations
 - news and public releases
 - speeches
 - event planning and co-ordination, and,
 - advertising and marketing.
- undertakes similar responsibilities for all ministry programs and provides strategic communications advice to the minister, the deputy minister, the Executive Committee and program managers
- oversees the communications activities and issues management for Crown corporations in the minister's portfolio, and,

- initiates and responds to the government's key strategic priorities, in particular, the ministry's involvement in creating jobs and enhancing economic development through sound investments in B.C.

■ Corporate Relations branch:

- manages and co-ordinates the Cabinet committee decision-making process and legislative program for the ministry, and the Crown corporations in the minister's portfolio
- co-ordinates all ministry materials and decision documents for Cabinet and Cabinet committees, including submissions to Treasury Board and Cabinet
- works with Treasury Board staff, Cabinet Policy and Communications Secretariat and Cabinet operations in scheduling all presentations to Cabinet committees and Cabinet
- maintains information and co-ordinates appointments of members to Crown corporations, agencies, boards and commissions, and,
- manages and/or provides support for strategic and operational planning processes within the ministry and on key projects or corporate programs for the deputy minister and the ministry.

This division also provides these services to the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Oil and Gas Commission.

- Gaming Policy Secretariat develops gaming policy in close consultation with the gaming sector stakeholders, BC Lottery Corporation, BC Gaming Commission, BC Racing Commission, Gaming Audit and Investigation Office, and Adult Addiction Services of the Ministry for Children and Families.

The following Crown corporations and agencies report to the Minister of Employment and Investment:

- BC Community Financial Services Corporation — operates the community-based financial institution, Four Corners Community Savings, which provides a full range of financial and related services to residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside who may not otherwise have access to basic banking services
- BC Hydro and Power Authority — the province's public electricity utility
- Job Protection Commission — provides mediation services and assists parties involved in a business closure to work co-operatively to develop plans to solve the problems facing the business
- BC Lottery Corporation — conducts and manages lottery games in the

province and co-operates with other provinces in the conduct and marketing of nationwide lottery games

- BC Gaming Commission — licenses and regulates charitable gaming and administers funding for community-based charitable, religious and other purposes
- BC Racing Commission — governs, directs, controls and regulates horseracing in the province and ensures a high standard of integrity in standardbred and thoroughbred racing to maintain the confidence of the betting public in the industry, and,
- BC Utilities Commission — an independent agency that regulates natural gas, electric, heating and propane utilities and ensures that the rates they charge are fair while maintaining a safe, reliable and viable utility industry.

The ministry is also responsible for housing programs, that:

- provide a contribution to the B.C. Housing Management Commission for the protection and enhancement of the supply of adequate and affordable housing, and,
- support the B.C. Housing Management Commission in providing administration of the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters program, which provides eligible seniors assistance with their shelter costs.

Creating and protecting jobs

Develops trade opportunities

The ministry identifies and assesses international and national trade opportunities for B.C. businesses and undertakes multilateral trade negotiations and trade development initiatives, provides market research and fosters local expertise to facilitate the realization of these opportunities.

In the area of international markets, during the period of this annual report, the ministry:

- co-ordinated and developed B.C.'s policies and positions for international trade negotiations to secure maximum access for B.C. exporters while protecting vulnerable domestic sectors.
 - monitored and commented on Canada's activities on multilateral trade agreements and negotiations involving the World Trade Organization and its predecessor the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade
 - played key role in delineating the province's concerns regarding the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and was instrumental in helping focus B.C.'s concerns opposing the MAI
- represented B.C.'s interests in Canada's regional trade negotiations such as:
 - North American Free Trade Agreement and its parallel accords on labour and the environment
 - Canada-Chile Trade Agreement
 - Canada-Israel Trade Agreement
 - Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation initiative, and,
 - Free Trade Area of the Americas.
- developed a consultation process to determine the province's position regarding the ongoing negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the proposed global negotiations at the World Trade Organization. [Consultations were initiated in fiscal 1999/00.]
- encouraged the federal government to take steps to ensure Canada's water resource is beyond the reach of Canada's international trade obligations

- represented and advanced B.C.'s interests in international trade disputes, including:

- challenges to the Canadian supply management system
- Asian import licensing restrictions affecting B.C. products, and,
- threatened restrictions on Canadian wine.

- with the assistance of the B.C. forestry industry, secured a commitment from the federal government to initiate consultations in the World Trade Organization challenging the European Union's ban on green lumber imports from Canada. Played a key supporting role, along with industry, in the 1998 WTO consultations on this issue.

- worked with the ministries of agriculture and food, and fisheries to support the Canadian government's efforts to require Australia to eliminate its inconsistent import ban on uncooked salmon. Canada has won two WTO panel cases against Australia on its ban of uncooked salmon.

- co-ordinated B.C.'s participation in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), an organization consisting of legislators and key private-sector representatives from the five Pacific Northwest states — Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington — and B.C. and Alberta. Through

membership in PNWER, the provincial government has ensured that issues of importance to B.C., such as the development of transboundary transportation corridors, remain at the forefront of PNWER discussions.

- ensured B.C.'s strong presence through its foreign offices — particularly in the Asia-Pacific region where markets present the greatest growth potential — by managing international representation in four off-shore locations, ensuring the delivery of cost-effective professional services to both government and the business community.

In the area of domestic markets the ministry:

- developed and co-ordinated B.C.'s trade strategies for Canadian intergovernmental negotiations to represent the provincial government's interests in interprovincial trade and other domestic trade negotiations:
 - assisted B.C. businesses with trade access problems in other provinces, and,
 - ensured B.C.'s trade interests were met:
 - maintained the provincial government's log export policy
 - exempted Medicare and social services from the Agreement on Internal Trade

- developed business incentives required to support economic development, and,
 - ensured ongoing internal trade agreement negotiations do not encroach upon B.C.'s autonomy over its social and economic development programs.
- provided basic trade data and analysis for other ministries and the public.

Fosters international and domestic private-sector investment

The ministry aggressively marketed B.C.'s investment potential to domestic and international investors.

It also worked in partnership with existing businesses to expand their operations to create jobs or to preserve existing ones.

To facilitate investment in B.C., the ministry:

- updated the Investment Climate British Columbia publication and its accompanying series of investment opportunity profiles
- managed the business immigration program, which included delivering seminars, which attracted approximately 1,000 attendees
- managed more than \$20 million in investments in the BC Investment Fund, authorized under the Immigration Act
- launched a pilot program jointly with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to attract business immigrants and to encourage prospective business immigrants to visit the province
- improved and updated the BCTIO Web site to ensure company profiles and sector and investment information were current
- supported the International Maritime Centre, which works to secure relocation of international shipping companies to B.C.
- supported the International Financial Centre, whose members completed international financial transactions of more than \$1 billion
- provided comparative locational analysis service to a variety of potential investment projects (e.g., Mosel Vitelic, Louisiana Pacific Oriented Strandboard plants, Dunn & Bradstreet, Nippon Light Metal, etc.), and,
- in support of ski resort development,
 - assisted with three interim agreements for ski development — Golden, Blue River (aka Saddle Mountain) and Garibaldi
 - assisted with three environmental assessment application reviews (Jumbo, Cayoosh, Garibaldi)
 - participated in five inter-agency reviews
 - completed an annual review of the ski industry, and,
 - developed an integrated environmental assessment/CASP ski industry review process.

The ministry worked to increase exports by engaging in strategic industry development activities including:

- co-ordinating outgoing and incoming international missions such as,
 - the premier's business mission to South China, which included a delegation of 50 business representatives
 - the minister's missions to Europe, Asia and Latin America
 - the value-added wood products mission to India on behalf of B.C. Wood Specialties Group and other private sector companies
 - the federal-provincial business immigration mission to Latin America, and,
 - visit programs for more than 165 international trade and investment delegations travelling to B.C.
- co-ordinating the BC Export Award program, providing a significant marketing boost to five award winners
- managing provincial representation in London, Tokyo, Taipei and Hong Kong
- developing and implementing a strategy to streamline the network of international offices
- providing information on B.C. companies' activity in specific geographic regions
- co-ordinating provincial input on forest certification standards
- supporting strategic alliances such as,
 - supporting the Canada Comfort Direct marketing initiative for value-added building products, which

generated \$110 million in sales to Japan for its 20 member companies

- continuing collaborative efforts between key players in the health industries sector, such as Newbridge Networks, Starvision, ALI Technologies, MAGIC (Media and Graphics Interdisciplinary Centre) at UBC, GE Canada and St. Paul's Hospital
- supporting a Polish market initiative representing 10 leading environmental service firms
- continuing work under the memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Department of Energy, two national laboratories, B.C., Alberta and five Pacific Northwest states for industrial collaboration covering environmental remediation, environmental technology demonstrations and exploring opportunities in biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, energy and natural resource initiatives
- marketing a cluster of companies focusing on "green" design and building, and,
- advancing fuel cell commercialization by developing a fuel-cell commercialization strategy to maximize future supply chain opportunities for B.C.-based manufacturers of fuel cell components, focusing on employment and investment potential for B.C., and initiating an informal supply-chain company network.

- developing export strategies for targeted products, sectors and international markets, including:

- supporting activities of the Health Industries Development Office, especially in its efforts to penetrate the Taiwanese and Japanese markets
- preparing a provincial telehealth strategy
- working with the Japanese External Trade Organization (JETRO) on the BCTIO-JETRO Health Products Show in Japan as well as four sectoral seminars in B.C. — environmental industries, information technology, multi-media Internet and health care
- promoting fuel-cell industry development, and,
- preparing an aerospace strategy in order to position provincial support for B.C. aerospace investment.

In the area of strategic issues/projects, the ministry:

- completed the request for proposals process to select the preferred proponent for development of the expanded trade and exhibition facilities in Vancouver and initiated contract negotiations with key participants, and,
- oversaw the financial restructuring of Skeena Cellulose Inc. saving 2,200 direct jobs.

In some cases, the ministry provided business analysis and negotiated financial assistance to specific projects in order to create or preserve jobs such as:

- finalizing Industrial Incentive Fund financial participation for Avcorp Industries (\$4.8 million); MTU Maintenance Canada Ltd. (\$19.5 million); J.S. McMillan Fisheries (\$8.1 million); Delta Fraser Properties Partnership (\$25 million); Cloverdale Lettuce and Vegetable Co-operative (\$450,000); CGED Forest Products (\$725,000); and Pacific Precision Wood Products (\$2 million)
- finalizing loan guarantees for Skeena Cellulose Inc. (\$96 million); 552513 British Columbia Ltd. (\$31.3 million); Omega Packing (\$500,000); Goose Creek Lumber (\$400,000); and Creston Packing (\$100,000)
- assisting in developing a restructuring plan for Canadian Airlines by working with creditors, management, labour and senior levels of government on a four-year strategy in order to maintain 6,000 jobs in B.C.
- supporting the activities of the Job Protection Commission, including facilitation of the continuation of mining activities at the Highland Valley Mine
- leading financial assistance negotiations and completing due diligence analysis for the ministry, Job Protection Commission, BC Transportation Financing Authority, Forest Renewal BC

and Fisheries Renewal BC and other ministries for provincial financial participating in projects

- reviewed requests for provincial funding totalling more than \$200 million, and,
- advancing the \$8.6-million provincial funding and participating in the project steering committee for the Ballard Power Systems project to commercialize fuel cells for buses.

Facilitates and co-ordinates strategic public-sector capital investments

The ministry facilitated and co-ordinated public-sector capital investments to ensure that economic development activities were consistent with and supported the provincial government's job creation priority.

In so doing the ministry co-chaired the Canada-B.C. Infrastructure Works program agreement for the provincial government, co-ordinated the activities of the various partner agencies, reviewed program applications and directly administered projects approved under the program's enhanced public service component.

The first agreement (IWP-1):

- provided \$675 million to upgrade provincial infrastructure and create jobs on approved projects over the agreement's lifetime with the funding shared equally by the federal and provincial governments and a project's proponent, and,

- allocated 85 per cent of the funding for projects related to water, sewer and local transportation services and 15 per cent for other infrastructure projects that provide enhanced public services and result in significant economic benefits.

IWP-1 was amended in spring 1996 to extend the program from March 31, 1997, with infrastructure projects completion by Oct. 31, 1998.

This resulted in about 400 projects receiving approval by March 31, 1997 — representing a commitment of nearly \$675 million and resulting in about 9,000 jobs created throughout B.C.

Under the second agreement (IWP-2), \$150 million was invested in road and transit improvements with completion of infrastructure projects by March 31, 1999.

Works with the public sector in its economic development responsibilities

The ministry is the lead government agency responsible for creating jobs by developing and promoting sustainable economic growth throughout B.C.

During the period of this annual report the ministry did this in several ways:

- provided a central policy and planning function for the public sector:
 - established the Construction Secretariat to continue its consultations on various regulatory issues, including regulatory streamlining
 - co-ordinated and managed Premier's Summits on Economic Opportunity in the Southern Interior (Kamloops, May 27-29, 1998) and in the Kootenays (Castlegar, Nov. 4-6, 1998)
 - initiated work on the Premier's Summits on Economic Opportunity for the Cariboo-Chilcotin (108 Mile Ranch, May 1999) and for Vancouver Island/Coast (Courtenay and Campbell River, October 1999)
 - co-ordinated follow-up work for all earlier summits, including Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation projects
 - developed positions and strategies on the impact of, and management opportunities within the B.C. electricity sector
 - developed a provincial position in response to electric reliability concerns raised by the federal government and the Canadian Electrical Association, and,
 - managed a program to provide more favourable electricity rates to new and expanding investment in B.C.
- managed the Build BC Special Account under the Build BC Act, and led and guided government agencies in developing specific program initiatives and proposals under the Act
- developed provincial transportation positions and strategies:
 - co-ordinated the provincial response to the federal review of the grain transportation and handling system
 - developed a transportation jobs strategy
 - developed a grain transportation strategy, and,
 - developed options for the northern transportation corridor.
- completed a request for proposals under the Power for Jobs Development Act, which facilitated the development of several new and expanded ventures in B.C.
- worked with other ministries and agencies to support job creation and economic development opportunities:
 - conducted research and analysis on aluminum smelter development and other manufacturing
 - provided impact assessments for the multi-stakeholder land and resources management planning tables in various forest districts around the province
 - assessed applications for major timber tenure awards
 - participated in the Economic Development Ministers' Conference

- co-ordinated government involvement in aboriginal economic development initiatives
- provided policy and analytical support to the Environmental Assessment Office for industrial development and electricity projects
- monitored progress on major projects for the provincial jobs strategy
- co-ordinated government input into the grain transportation review
- supported provincial participation in negotiations for devolution of Victoria Harbour, and,
- co-ordinated the B.C./Washington Corridor Task Force including work on the Inland Corridors initiative and the International Mobility and Trade Corridor project.

Encourages the revitalization of traditional industries

The ministry supports the Job Protection Commission in helping viable companies restructure to continue to be competitive and preserve jobs for British Columbians.

■ The commission:

- provides consulting, counseling or mediation services to businesses that are economically significant to their communities or region
- assists in the development of economic plans for eligible companies — these plans involve obligations to the province and are only available to strategic industries — fabricated structural metal products, fishing, logging, mining, non-ferrous metal smelting and refining, shipbuilding and repair, truck and bus body and trailer, and wood, paper and allied products
- undertakes special projects and recommends government financial assistance to qualifying businesses, and,
- between its inception in March 1991 and Dec. 31, 1998, the commission received 1,450 inquiries which resulted in 916 projects/cases requiring assistance and involved more than 71,500 employees.

■ During calendar year 1998 the commission:

- undertook 335 projects/cases, 286 of which involved the Credit Enhancement (Emergency) Fund resulting in approval of loan guarantees totalling \$24.2 million to 135 companies impacted by Skeena Cellulose Inc.
- provided counseling to 27 firms
- developed four mediation and 13 economic plans
- carried out special projects, and,
- helped maintain 5,663 jobs in total.

Management services

The ministry implements management support services in the areas of corporate relations, finance and administration, library, human resources, employment equity, information management, administrative services and community development.

Corporate relations:

- managed and co-ordinated the Cabinet committee decision-making process and the legislative program of the ministry and Crown corporations in the minister's portfolio
- managed and/or provided support for strategic and operational planning processes within the ministry and on key or corporate projects for the deputy minister and the ministry
- co-ordinated all materials and decision documents for Cabinet and Cabinet committees, including submissions for Treasury Board and Cabinet, and worked with Treasury Board staff and the Cabinet Policy and Communications Secretariat in scheduling all planning sessions and presentations, and,
- maintained information and co-ordinated appointments of board members to the ministry's Crown corporations, agencies, boards and commissions.

Finance and administration:

- implemented financial management and control systems, including Year 2000 upgrade and new interface with the government's central accounting system
- managed facilities, telecommunications, vehicles and administrative records
- implemented a new library catalogue system and expanded an Internet site allowing public access to unique publications and maps
- responded to more than 3,000 library reference queries and served more than 2,000 library visitors
- controlled expenditures, assets, liabilities, revenues, special accounts and funds
- reported on the ministry's financial status, and,
- managed various government companies.

Human resources:

- provided human resources services to support the establishment of the Gaming Policy Secretariat
- managed the human resources elements of a reorganization of the Communications division

- managed the transfer of staff involved in capital projects to the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations
- assisted the Gaming Commission with the human resources aspects of integrating new business requirements into commission operations
- successfully expanded student hiring
- expanded the use of Internet technology to provide human resources information to clients
- provided discrimination and harassment awareness training to new staff
- supported employment equity initiatives including expanded use of outreach recruitment
- co-ordinated the Ministry's multi-cultural initiatives
- updated the Ministry's risk assessment for workplace violence, and,
- managed ongoing workforce adjustment.
- published an Internet site for the ministry, which has enhanced communication between the ministry and its stakeholders
- continued testing hardware and software used in the ministry to ensure it will remain functional after Jan. 1, 2000
- established the data administrator function and started development of standards to ensure consistency in the management of information
- replaced the correspondence tracking system with the government standard system
- implemented asset inventory control mechanisms to ensure all ministry computer assets are recorded and tracked and introduced regular computer asset acquisition reporting
- developed and started a two-year records management project, which will establish approved ARCS and ORCS and classify documents stored off-site
- identified documents that are routinely releasable outside of the freedom of information (FOI) process, and,
- provided training update sessions for FOI policies and procedures and records management.

Information management:

- completed the implementation of the ministry standard operating system and electronic mail software in ministry offices in Vancouver to increase productivity and maximize support efficiencies
- updated the telecommunication infrastructure to meet the increased capacity requirements of remote and local access

Community development:

- promoted community development and awareness through public events, seminars, presentations, funding and consultation with various groups including Sustainable Agriculture Jobs Education, Farm Folk City Folk, Step Sawmill, Boys R Us, Richmond Skateboarders, Molehill, Synala Co-op, Latin American Market Society and the Portland Hotel Society
- provided assistance and employment opportunities, job training, job development and education through programs such as BladeRunners in Victoria, Vernon, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Prince George, Kelowna and the Lower Mainland, providing training in the construction trades for street-involved youth, and identifying employment opportunities at both private- and public-sector construction projects
- promoted and developed partnerships with the private, public, non-profit and trade-union sectors to achieve common goals. Examples of partnerships include the BladeRunners program, the Woodward's housing co-op (see below) and the Portland Hotel Society
- continued to support community institutions and services in response to identified community interest. This includes Four Corners Community Savings development savings accounts, a welfare-to-work program, which allows individuals on income assistance to receive loans, and the Four Corners Support Fund Society, which provides loan guarantees for individuals typically not able to access credit
- examined the potential impacts and opportunities (social, cultural, environmental and economic) resulting from the expansion of the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre
- piloted innovative projects in partnership with communities and acted as a catalyst for unique projects that promote the concepts of equity, community/user design and community awareness and pride, and,
- facilitated community pride and awareness by protecting heritage sites and promoting "adaptive re-use" of historic buildings, as demonstrated in the proposed redevelopment of the former Woodward's building as a housing co-operative and the renovations in the Sunrise and Washington hotels.



Communications

Communications played a key role in implementing the ministry's mandate of fostering the creation and preservation of jobs. In the period of this annual report the Communications division:

- disseminated information through 116 news releases on many provincial government initiatives, such as:
 - BladeRunners program
 - federal-provincial Infrastructure Works program
 - assistance to Avcorp Industries Inc. for its new aerospace manufacturing plant
 - assistance to Skeena Cellulose and Evans Forest Products
 - Power for Jobs program
 - Premier's Summits on Economic Opportunity – Southern Interior and Kootenays
 - limited expansion of gaming in the province, and,
 - trade missions to Asia and Latin America.
- provided oversight for the communications plans of Crown corporations reporting to the minister
- provided communications support for various ministry programs and projects and arranged special events and openings of capital projects, such as those undertaken under the Canada-B.C. Infrastructure Works program, and,
- drafted speeches, arranged news conferences and media interviews, produced ministry publications and assisted other agencies and Crown corporations in producing their publications.



Legislation

Legislation administered by the ministry:

- *British Columbia Enterprise Corporation Act*
- *Build BC Act* other than Part 4, in relation to the BC Transportation Financing Authority
- *Builders Lien Act*
- *Commercial Transport Act* (those sections that pertain to the reassignment of responsibilities to ICBC following completion of the Motor Vehicle Branch/ICBC merger)
- *Community Financial Services Act*
- *Economic Development Electricity Rate Act*
- *Energy Efficiency Act*
- *Horse Racing Act*
- *Hydro and Power Authority Act*
- *Hydro and Power Authority Privatization Act*
- *Hydro Power Measures Act*
- *Industrial Development Incentive Act*, other than in relation to the Small Business Incentive Program
- *Insurance Corporation Act*
- *Insurance (Motor Vehicle Act)*
- *Job Protection Act*
- *Lottery Act*
- *Lottery Corporation Act*
- *Ministry of Industry and Small Business Development Act*, other than in relation to small business and tourism
- *Ministry of International Business and Immigration Act*, except immigration provisions
- *Ministry of International Trade, Science and Investment Act*, insofar as it does not relate to the development of science and technology, and does not relate to aid in the development of communications systems for the people of B.C.
- *Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act*, sections 5(c) and 10 only
- *Motor Vehicle Act* (those sections that pertain to the reassignment of responsibilities to ICBC following completion of the Motor Vehicle Branch/ICBC merger)
- *Natural Resource Community Fund Act*
- *Pacific Racing Association Act*
- *Power for Jobs Development Act*
- *Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters Act*
- *Special Enterprise Zone and Tax Relief Act*
- *Trade Development Corporation Act*, and,
- *Utilities Commission Act.*

Ministry expenditure summary

Unaudited 1998/99

Expenditures \$ in thousands

Minister's Office (Vote 28)	330
Ministry Operations (Vote 29)	
Corporate Services (net of recoveries)	13,201
Economic Development	7,819
BC Trade and Investment Office (net of recoveries)	12,069
Reserves for Doubtful Accounts and Concessionary Loans	7,931
Contributions to BC Racing Commission (net of recoveries)	0
Contributions to BC Gaming Commission (net of recoveries)	3,810
Housing Programs	87,214
	132,044
BC Utilities Commission (Vote 30)	0
Statutory—	
Williston Reservoir Compensation Costs	430
Special Account —	
Build BC	1,782
Special Fund —	
Natural Resource Community Fund	10,006
Less: transfer from Vote 29 to the Build BC Special Account	(4,500)
Less: transfer from the Natural Resource Community Fund	
Special Fund to the General Account	(10,006)
Valuation Allowance	701
Tangible Capital Assets	(478)
Amortization Expense	404
Total Expense	130,713